LAKE AREA FOOTBALL LEAGUE RULES

Morgan County Jasper County

Putnam County Greene County

**REVISED 6/6/19**

**Governing Rules:**

 The Lake Area Football League will play by the current GHSA rules; with the exceptions listed within these rules.

 Each child must start and play on either offense or defense. A child may play both.

 Roster limit is 22 players.

 Practices may begin the 2nd Monday in August. 1st Week of practices will be HELMET ONLY. No “back-to-back” contact days.

 Once LAF games have begun, NO Middle School players are allowed to participate on LAF teams.

 Per the "Return to Play Act of 2013", effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. It is each member agency's responsibility to ensure their participants have been properly and duly notified and that their agency is in compliance.

**Age Control Date:** age as of September 1st of the current year

 There are three (3) age divisions: 7/8 year olds, 9/10 year olds and 11/12 year olds

**Equipment:**

 A ***uniform*** for youth football shall include a helmet with faceguard, 2 or 4 point chin strap snaps, shoulder pads, football pants with pads protecting the hips, thighs and knees, and jersey with numerals on front and back. It is mandatory that all players wear such uniforms.

 ***Shoes*** are mandatory. No shoes with detachable cleats may be worn. Sneakers, tennis shoes and rubber molded cleats are acceptable.

 ***Mouthpieces*** must be worn by all players participating in the game and meet current GHSA requirements. They should be attached to the helmet and be visible to the game officials. Mouthpieces MUST be attached to the helmet.

 ***Casts*** are acceptable provided ALL conditions are met under the GHSA/NFHS rules. *(1.5.3(c): Hard substance in its final form such as leather, rubber, plastic, plaster or fiberglass when worn on the hand, wrist, forearm or elbow unless covered on all exterior surfaces with no less than 1/2" thick, high-density, closed-cell polyurethane, or an alternate material of the same minimum thickness and similar physical properties to protect an injury as directed in writing by a licensed medical physician (M.D./D.O.). Such written direction shall be provided to the umpire prior to the start of the game.)*

**Length of Games:**

 7/8 year old Division: four (4) seven (7) minute quarters using a REGULATION clock;

 9/10 year old Division: four (4) seven (7) minute quarters using a REGULATION clock;

 11/12 year old Division: four (4) seven (7) minute quarters using a REGULATION clock.

Half-time will be five (5) minutes. If both teams have cheerleaders, the time will be split equally. Visiting team will cheer first.

Each team will be allowed three (3) one (1) minute timeouts per half.

NFHS/GHSA play clock will be utilized

**Scoring:** All touchdowns will be six (6) points. Field goals will be three (3) points. PAT's will be scored: one (1) point for running/passing from the 3yd line OR two (2) points if a successful kick is made through the uprights (where applicable); ***NOTE: a PAT Kick or Field goal is a "dead" ball and the ball will be snapped, held and kicked. The defensive team may hold their hands in the air, however, they are NOT allowed to jump. MAY USE A KICKING BLOCK ONLY.***

**Mercy Rule:** Beginning in the third quarter, if a team gains a twenty-four (24) point advantage, the clock will run continuously for the balance of the game. If the lead is reduced to seven (7) points, the clock will return to a regulation clock.

**Special Provisions:**

 Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for the next game, in addition to the game from which ejected (if in the last game, the suspension will include the first game of the following season). Lake Area Football Directors may increase or decrease suspension based on severity of actions. Notification will be made to all L.A.F. agencies regarding ejections/suspensions.

 Lake Area Football Directors reserve the right to make any decisions for the benefit of the program; including but not limited to discipline for coaches, administrators and participants as well as the addition or editing of League rules during the season.

 Only players, official coaches, cheerleaders, officials and Agency staff are permitted on the sidelines. Spectators must be at least ten (10) yards away from playing field.

 **Coaches:** All coaches (max. of 5) are required to stay within the boundaries of the coaching box, with noted exceptions:

 **7/8 year old Division**: one (1) coach is allowed in the huddle of the offensive and defensive team. Once the

 huddle has been broken, the coaches are to back up at least ten (10) yards. Coaches on the field are not

 allowed to communicate/talk to their players after the QB is under center or in shotgun formation (PENALTY: 5 yds).

 **Game Balls:** Footballs may be leather or composite leather;

 **7/8 year old Division:** PeeWee size ball; Wilson K2 or equivalent

 **9/10 year old Division:** Junior size ball; Wilson TDJ or equivalent

 **11/12 year old Division:** Youth size ball; Wilson TDY or equivalent

 Ball may NOT be turned prior to the snap

 **Kicking Game:**

 *Kickoffs:* **7/8 year old Division:** No Kickoff; ball placed on the 20yd line to begin possession

 **9/10 & 11/12 year old Division:** Kickoff will occur from 10yds behind midfield. The ball must be touching the tee.

 *Punting:* **7/8 year old Division:** No punting; the ball will be marked thirty (30) yards from the line of scrimmage or half the distance from inside the twenty (20) yd line by the referee. The ball cannot be spotted deeper than the ten (10) yd line.

 **9/10 & 11/12 year old Division:** Team must notify the referee before lining up to snap. The defensive and offensive teams will line up in a regular punt formation, with the punter at least five (5) yards off the line of scrimmage. The ball will be snapped to the punter who will kick in a normal manner after receiving the ball. If punter fumbles the snap, they will be allowed to retrieve the ball and punt from that point behind the line of scrimmage. the defensive and offensive teams may start playing (blocking, pursuing, etc.) at the time of the kick. (no more than two (2) wideouts may be used). Any violation concerning formations, crossing the line of scrimmage, rushing, pursuing, leaving early, etc. is a five (5) yd penalty and re-kick, if penalty is accepted. *(if a kicker crosses the line of scrimmage before kicking the ball, the ball is dead and a change of possession occurs at that point)*

 **Defensive Play:**

***7/8 year old Division:*** No nose guard or any player lining up on the center or in the guard/center gap (Offense may NOT utilize the QB sneak). Defensive line (guards, tackles) must be in a three (3) or four (4) point stance. Defensive line MUST be SET prior to snap.

 ***9/10 & 11/12 year old Division:*** GHSA playing rules

 **Field Dimensions:** 7/8 year old Division: 80yd field

 9/10 year old Division: 80yd field

 11/12 year old Division: 100yd field (80yd field may be utilized if 100yd field is not available)

 \*maximum penalty on 80yd field is 10yds

 **Weight Limits:** Players will have a contrasting color decal placed on the back of their helmet. "Striped" players are NOT eligible to receive the ball from a snap, handoff or pitch in the offensive backfield. "Striped" player is NOT eligible to receive a pass on offense. "Striped" offensive players must play "Tackle to Tackle", if playing at Tight End, player is an ineligible receiver. "Striped" defensive players will be allowed to advance a fumble or intercepted pass; there are no weight restrictions on defensive positions.

 7/8 year old Division: 110lb. weight limit

 9/10 year old Division: 135lb. weight limit

 11/12 year old Division: 160lb. weight limit

 It is the responsibility of each Recreation Agency to administer and verify compliance with the weight limits.

**Playoffs:** The top four (4) teams in each Division (7/8, 9/10, 11/12) will be eligible for the playoffs. Regular season games record will determine seeds (#1 seed vs. #4 seed; #2 seed vs. #3 seed). If a Division is split into Sub-Divisions, the top two teams from each Sub-Division will be eligible for the playoffs based on regular season games. Playoffs in Sub-Divided Divisions will cross over and play each other (ex. North #1 vs. South #2; South #1 vs. North #2). The Lake Area Football League Directors will determine sites for semi-final playoff games. Championship games will be played together at a site determined by the Lake Area Football League prior to the season.

**Tie Breakers:** used for individual games and/or playoff seeds.

 ***Individual games:*** If a game ends regulation in a tie, the 10yd line overtime procedure will be used with the ball being placed on the 10 yd line. Each team will have a series (GHSA procedure, except from the 10yd line). There will be two (2) overtime periods utilizing this method. The third (3rd) and each successive overtime period will use the penetration rule (team that gains the most yards or scores on the fewest plays in four (4) downs) to determine the winner.

 ***Playoff seeding:*** If two or more teams are tied at the end of the regular season, the following tie-breaker methods will be used to seed teams in the playoffs:

 Head to Head record;

 if two or more teams are tied and head to head cannot determine the seed,

 Division record;

 Best division record

 Least points allowed;

 the team with the least points allowed during games vs. the tied teams will be declared the higher seed, and so on, if necessary. Once there are only two teams tied, revert to head to head and repeat, If there is still a tie,

 Coin-Flip

 Coin flip will be decided by Recreation Department staff from each agency involved.